



Small Group Development Scenarios Workshop

6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Love Park Community Center (1000 W. 12th Street)

This special public workshop for the Inner Katy Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Study was opened at approximately 6:00 p.m. by Patricia Rincon-Kallman, Assistant Director of the City of Houston Planning & Development Department.

The workshop agenda included:

- Welcome and introductions;
- Opening presentation;
- Small group development scenarios exercise; and,
- Reporting of small group results.

Welcome and Introductions

Planning & Development Department staff, the Chief of Staff for Council Member Gabriel Vasquez, and project team members were introduced. The workshop purpose was explained, which was to involve Steering Committee members and other area residents in visualizing potential development scenarios for the two possible high capacity transit (HCT) alignments being evaluated through the Inner Katy TOD study.

Opening Presentation

Consultant team member Fregonese Calthorpe Associates (FCA) developed the workshop format and led the activities throughout the evening. John Fregonese made an opening presentation that covered the workshop purpose and process. He also explained the fundamentals of transit-oriented development, including implications for development density/appearance and increased transit use. He also emphasized requirements for successful TOD, including pedestrian convenience and streetscape amenities. The presentation included various images of TOD possibilities and animated examples of transit options, such as light rail and bus rapid transit.

Small Group Development Scenarios Exercise

Following the opening presentation, workshop participants were asked to proceed to the table to which they had been randomly pre-assigned as they arrived for the evening. This resulted in small groups of 5-10 people, with five groups in all. Each table had a large aerial photography plot of the study area with one of the two alternative HCT alignments highlighted. Members of the project team as well as City staff served as facilitators and led the groups through an exercise to create a development scenario for the HCT alignment before them.



In each small group, the development scenarios exercise consisted of:

- introductions;
- familiarizing everyone with the workshop resources (definitions of key terms, atlas of study area maps and data, information on development options/styles);
- identifying specific locations along the HCT alignment for potential transit stations;
- discussing local issues and concerns regarding HCT;
- selecting preferred land uses near transit station sites and along the HCT corridor;
- placing and arranging various land use “icons” on the study area base map to indicate the group’s preferred development pattern, densities and potential mixing of uses (the icons were paper chips providing a variety of options such as various types and intensities of residential and non-residential development, parks and pedestrian amenities, and public facilities and civic amenities such as fountains);
- coming to consensus on the group’s development scenario before permanently affixing the land use chips to the base map; and,
- discussing the implications of the development scenario and potential implementation issues and tools.

Reporting of Small Group Results

Following completion of the small group exercise, all workshop participants reconvened. The study area maps for each group were displayed as a group spokesperson explained the approach they took, goals/objectives they had in mind, key considerations and assumptions they used in creating their development scenario, and the resulting themes and features of their scenario.

Some groups focused on specific development sites/nodes they were aware of, others took a neighborhood protection approach and were concerned about preserving local assets (small businesses, historic districts, gateways, etc.), some wanted to see prominent public spaces (plazas, fountains, etc.), and others envisioned significant development nodes with mixing of uses and densities. All groups considered key locations for transit stops, with some concerned that too many stops would undermine transit speed and feasibility (one group suggested a “skip stop” approach for peak periods in which express service would only stop at certain stations).

Workshop Conclusion

Workshop attendees were congratulated for their participation and excellent work, the results of which provide important input to the upcoming project tasks involving evaluation of redevelopment potential, detailing the potential TOD pattern and nodes, and selecting a preferred transit mode/alignment to support TOD.

Everyone was reminded of the next Steering Committee meeting on August 22nd, at which more refined versions of the alternative development scenarios will be reviewed to work toward a preferred alternative. Everyone was also invited to the final Town Hall Meeting at the conclusion of the project, which will be held in mid-September (date to be determined).